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# A MODERATE ANSWER

## To these two QUESTIONS

1. Whether ther be sufficient Ground in Scripture to warrant the Conscience of a Christian to present his Infants to the Sacrament of Baptism.
2. Whether it be not sinfull for a Christian to receive the Sacrament in a mixt Assembly.

*Prepared for the Resolution of a Friend,*

And now

Presented to the publick view of all, for the satisfaction of them who desire to walk in the Ancient and long-approved way of Truth and Holiness.

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By T.B. B.D.

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EPH. 4. VER. 1. 2. 3.

*I therefore, the Prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that yee walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called: with all LOWLINES and MEEKNES, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in LOVE, endeavouring to keep the UNITY of the Spirit, in the Bond of PEACE.*

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no. 28.

LONDON,

1644

Printed by I.N. for Abel Roper, at the signe of the Sunne over  
against S. Dunstons Church in Fleet-street, 1645.

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to warrant the Conscience of a Christian  
to obey his Intest to the State of Britain.  
2. Whether he be not liable for a Christian to receive  
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Printed at the Press of the London Society in the year 1744

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and the E K V E S and long suffering forbearing and meekness in  
I O V E and kindness to all men as the Lord of the Spirit in the  
Blessed RE K E

1744

Not printed 28

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1  
*On desire mine opinion touching these two Questions.*

1. Whether there be sufficient Ground in the Scripture to warrant the conscience of a Christian to present his Infants to the Sacrament of Baptism, with an expectation of Benefit that may accrew unto them by it?

2 Whether it be not sinfull for a Christian to receive the Sacrament in a mixt Assembly? *I shall endeavour to give Answer to them both for the satisfying of your conscience: So that you turn not Conscience into Will: and Iudgement into Affection. The meek (yea only the meek) will the Lord guid in judgement, and teach his way. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, he will shew them his Covenant, Psal. 25.*

*The Answer to the first Question.*

**A**S for the first, I answer affirmatively: There is sufficient Ground in that Scripture to warrant the conscience of a Christian to present his Infants to the Sacrament of Baptism, with an expectation of Benefit that may accrew unto them by it: wherein I observe two particulars. 1. Whether the Parent so doing may be excused from sinning through an unwarrantable use and Application of Gods Ordinance? 2. Whether he may in the use thereof expect any Benefit accrewing to the Infant? These two are different in their own Nature, and require either of them severall Grounds of Satisfaction. For tho, if it be sinfull for the Parent to bring his Infants to Baptism, he can expect no good for them by it: In as much as no man may expect good to come from what is evill: yet tho it be not sinfull in the Parent, it will not follow that Good may be expected by it: But I hold the Affirmative part of Both to be the Truth of God.

*The first Argument.*

This I build upon the words of our blessed Saviour in *Mat. 19. 14. Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me* — Children. The children

here mentioned were *Infants*; such as men do hold in their arms: The text saith *2d. Pet. 1. 5.* that *He took them up in his arms, &c.* Where we see that our Saviour was highly displeased with his Disciples, who had rebuked the Parents for bringing their children to Christ. Hence I argue Christs justification of what is done doth presuppose the lawfulness of the thing. It was (therefore) lawfull for the Parents to bring their children to Christ to receive his Blessing if lawfull for them, so also for others, for all. Consequently even for us there is a sufficient warrant to present our Infants to Christ, that they may receive his blessing. You will reply: That, tho it be lawfull to present Infants to Christ to receive his blessing, yet not (therefore) lawfull to present them to Baptism: I admit your reply but rejoin thus. If lawfull to present them to Christ for his blessing: Then lawfull to present them to him in his Ordinances in which that blessing is to be expected. This I suppose will stand good: That whosoever might be welcom to Christ in his person, were he here upon earth may be admitted to his Ordinances in which he is present by the power of his Spirit. For who doubteth but that he hath set up his Ordinances in the Church for this end; that in them he might meet those of his who desire to draw neer unto Him: and by these Ordinances as by a Mean appointed for that end convey to them that Blessing and Grace, which were he present with us in the flesh, he would bestow upon them. This being laid down for a Ground: I build upon it thus: but ther is none other of Christs Ordinances, in which, and by which a Christian can present his Infants to Christ, with expectation of his Blessing excepting this of Baptism: Consequently, either by Baptism they may be presented to Christ for his blessing, or not at all: If not at all: Either Christs presence in his Ordinances is not equivalent to his Corporall presence, or some prohibition hath in a speciall maner put in a Barr to keep them off from his Ordinances which did not keep them off from him when here upon earth: If any such there be, let it be named: if not: Then is ther a sufficient ground to warrant the Parents bringing their children to Christ in his Ordinances, and particularly in Baptism, that ther-in they may expect the Benefit of Christs Benediction.

I know what hath been objected: *viz.* That ther is a Barr to hinder Infants implied in thes texts: *Math. 28. 19. Mar. 16. 16. Act. 8. 36.* from whence this Argument is framed: without Faith none may be baptised: Infants want Faith, and (therefore) They may not be baptised: And then, To what purpose should they be presented to that Sacrament. To which I answer: That granting the Assumption to be true, (tho if a man deny it as some do, *Vide Greg. Decretal. lib. 3. cap. 3. De Baptismo & ejus effectu*, I see not how it can be proved): But I say, let it be granted that Infants have not Faith: The Proposition is utterly false: *viz.* That without Faith none may be baptised: For neither do the texts prove it; and besides, ther is good reason against it.

1. The texts prove it not: 1. Not *Mat. 28. 19.* This indeed sheweth what the Ministry



Ministry must do: Not what the People: The Ministry, must teach all Nations; But defineth nothing, whether they may not be baptised before they have learned, or before they do beleeve: much less doth it say, None but beleevers may be baptised. 2. Nor *Mar. 16*. This text sheweth, what is the issue of Beleeving, and being Baptised, *viz.* That such shall be saved: and contrarily, He that beleeveeth not shall be damned: But saith not, That none may be baptised who beleeveeth not. *Ob.* But the Order of the Words doth inferr it. Beleeving set before Baptising: *Sol.* I reply: That Doctrines collected from the order of words are not alway sound, nor such Arguments conclusive: *Ex. gr. Mat. 3. 6. they were baptised, confessing their sinns, And Joh. 3. 5. Born again of water, and of the Spirit:* Here is Baptised before Confessing: and Water before Spirit: yet doubtless they did confess their sins before they were baptised: And who knoweth not, that the Spirit doth sometime prevent the Water of Baptism. 3. Nor yet *Act. 8. 36*. This indeed proveth the affirmative, *viz.* That He who beleeveeth may be baptised. But from thence to conclude the Negative, That He who beleeveeth not, may not be baptised, is against all Rules of reasoning: which will yet more plainly appear by this: *Philip* saith, *If thou believe with thy whole heart, thou maist*; Will any man thence conclude, That whoso beleeveeth not with *his whole heart*, may not be baptised? And so take liberty to barre all such as presenting themselves, and professing their faith, may yet perhaps justly be suspected of Fiction and Dissimulation? You see then, the texts do not prove the Proposition. Nay, suppose that not by inference, but in direct terms, some of these texts should say, He that beleeveeth not, shall not be baptised: ought we not to understand it as true only in those persons of whom the text speaketh? *viz.* Of them that have been taught, and yet do srowardly refuse, and profess a dislike and misbeleef of what hath been taught them? And so it will be too weak an Argument, to prove that universall Proposition, and much less to draw on the desired conclusion, Without faith none may be baptised, None, *Ergo*, Not Infants: *ex. gr.* That text of *Mark* saith: *He that beleeveeth not shall be damned, &c.* Without Faith none shall be saved: Will any man understand this in that Universality as to include Infants? Will he assume Infants beleeve not, have no faith. (therefore) They shall not be saved? God forbid: The Proposition hath it's latitude of Truth, beyond which it may not be extended. So then, these texts do shew what is required of the Apostles and their successors: What of the Nations and Heads of the Families in the Nations, persons that are *Sui juris*, not under the command of another: But determineth nothing of inferiours, and much less concludeth against Infants Baptism.

2. Good reason against it. For why? First, a profession of Faith is enough to entitle men to Baptism: Tho there be no soundness and sincerity in the heart at all: Witness the admission of *Simon Magus*, True indeed, except there be

*A Moderate Answer to the Question,*

soundnes in the heart, God may justly deny man the Benefit which otherwise he might expect. But, if he make profession to beleev in Christ, who shall dare to deny him the Sacrament. 2. That which is presupposed to assert the necessitie of Faith: (understanding it of the grace it self) is doubtful, viz. That without Faith no man hath wher-with-all to receiv the Benefit of Baptism. This I say may well be doubted, if not denyed: especially if we intend to comprehend Infants and little children: They have a passive capacity, which is enough to receive that Grace and Benefit which we conceiv is reached forth to *them* in that Sacrament: And what is that? Not such a fulness of Grace, or the Habits ther-of, as may be expected by them who have formerly been prepared by the Discipline and information of the Word: But rather *initiall and seminall Grace*, that seed of God, wher-of the Scripture speaketh, *Pet. 1. 23. 1 Joh. 3. 9.* The which doth not presuppose Grace in the Heart, but is it self the seed and root of Faith, and all other actuall Graces whatsoever. To men and women converted by the Word, and then coming to Baptism, viz. To *Crispus, Cornelius, Lydia &c.* we beleev that Baptism doth (as to *Abrahams* Circumcision did) convey a super-addition of further Grace, to what they had formerly received in and by the Word: But to their children, Baptism conveyeth (as did Circumcision to *Issac*) the beginning and first seeds of Grace; And consequently calleth for no previous dispositions and preparations in the Recipient: only a passive capacity, not cross-barted with obstinacy and infidelity. It is the property of *preventing* Grace, to be the first mover in the Heart, and to make way for it's own Reception: Is this acknowledged to be done in the ministry of the Word upon the Parents (as it is said of *Cornelius* and *Lydia*) and shall it seem unreasonable to grant it to be done by this first Sacrament in their children? For why? Did we conceiv the Spirit (who is the chief Agent and efficient working in and by the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and without whose operation and assistance, they are but as empty vessels and edgless tools) the Spirit I say did we conceiv him working only as a morall Agent, to stand at the door and knock, as only ready and willing to enter if the door be opened; to proffer Grace, if man will receive it; Then were it reason indeed to require Faith in Children no less than in their Parents: But it is not so: We conceiv him in the Baptising of Infants working as a Naturall, or rather as a *super-naturall* Agent, viz. opening the door and entring, putting Grace in the Heart, and working it in the Will, conferring upon them such a Grace as for the present they are capable of, viz. *initiall, and seminall*, as before was said.

Add this also: That in the Baptising of Infants, ther is not Baptism altogether without Faith. Ther is presupposed the Faith of the Parent; And this sufficeth to qualify the Infant for Baptism, yea, for the Grace and Benefit of that Sacrament. What is the Benefit of Baptism? Is it not Remission of sin and spirituall Regeneration?



Regeneration? To the obtaining of which, why may not the Faith of the Parent suffice? In the child, as yet corruption of Nature which he brought into the world is not active: it hath produced neither thoughts, words, nor deeds against the law: and therefore calleth for no personall Act of Grace to remove the Guilt ther-of. Guilty he is and polluted, but guilty only by imputation, and polluted, not by any consent of his own, but by the act of another, viz. of his Parents: Is it any wonder that the imputation of anothers faith, should procure for him Remission and removall of that which cometh by the imputation of anothers act? That as he sinned in another, so he may be said to beleeve in another? Here is then the equity of Gods proceedings; that what Malady and mischief was contracted without his will, shall be cured and remedied without him, and any act of his: It is by the ordinance and institution of God that the guilt of *Adams* transgression is imputed to the Infant, and the Corruption of Nature propagated: And it is by the Ordinance of God, that the Guilt of that sin is remitted, and a Remedy against that Native disease provided: and both these are done in and upon the Infant, without any concurrence of his own will. And as by the act of the Parents, corruption of Nature is propagated (their act it is, tho not voluntary in them) So by the act of the Parents (in this it is a voluntary act) by Faith laying hold upon the Promise of God in that Sacrament is obtained for the Infant, and bestowed upon him the Grace of Regeneration: This to be the root and spring of future holines and righteousness, as the other was the root and spaun of wickednes and profaness. *Ob.* It is said, That every man must live by his own faith, not by anothers. *Sol.* By his faith, indeed it is said that the just shall live, *Hab. 2. 4.* It is not said, *Not by anothers*, this is not in the text of the Prophet; Nor doth the text speak simply of the Benefit it self gained by Faith, but of the Pre-assurance ther-of: No pre-assurance of Salvation but by Faith: But this doth not prove, That by his faith the Parent may not obtain for his child this benefit of Baptism, the Remedy for that Malady. We read in the Gospell, That the woman of *Canaan* obtained mercy for her daughter: The man for his lunatick sonn, the Centurion for his servant, the friends and neighbours for the Palsie-sick man. Which instances have been alleged by Divines to manifest this point in hand, viz. The Benefit of Baptism obtained for the child by the Faith of the Parents. That note of *Remission* is worth the noting. She saith not, *Help my daughter*, but *help me, and have mercy on me*: and so *Mar. 9. 21.* The father of the Lunatick saith, *If thou canst do any thing have compassion on us, and help us.* He puts himself in as a Co-partner of his

*Quanto magis probaberi non debet infans, qui recens natus nihil peccavit, nisi quod sciendum Adam carnaliter natus: qui ad remissionem peccatorum accipiendam hoc ipso facilius accedit, quod illi remittuntur non propria, sed aliena peccata. Cyprian. Epist. 59.*

*Bernard Serm. 66. in Cantica. Ecbertus contra Catharos, Serm. 7. Remigius on Mat. 13. 31. Calvin: Harmon on Mat. 9.*

his child's misery. Say the same here. It is a mercy to the Father that he can prevail for his child; who if he do rightly understand himself suffereth in his child: yea, not only by the way of compassion, but as feeling the smart and punishment of himself: And therefore hath need to sue unto God for the Removing of that punishment which lyeth upon himself, in his child. Yea, he hath this reason to challenge it at the hand of God by the prayer of Faith, that so he may obtain the fulnes of the Promise made to the faithful in the Covenant of Grace. Infants are part of their Parents; So that the promise of Grace mentioned in the Covenant betwixt God and the Faithfull; *Gen. 17.* is not ratified to the whole Parent; except also it do extend to his Infants. So then, it is the Faith of the Parent laying hold on the Promise which qualifieth his Infant for the Grace and good effect of Baptism.

Nay yet more: This text on which the Argument was grounded, *Mat. 19.* cometh yet neerer to the point; For first, the blessing of Christ which the Parents sought and found for their children, was not terminated in an externall and corporall Benefit, as per-adventure it might be replied touching those former Instances: Doubtless the Blessing of Christ extended to the good of their souls; and yet procured by the Faith of the Parents without any concurrence of Faith in the Infants. I will not per-emptorily affirm it: But probable enough it is, that these Parents having been by *John's* Baptism directed to Christ, when they knew him, brought their children to Him to receive a further blessing from him, even that which *John* told them he could not give, but they must expect it from another, even from Christ. Next it may be worth the noting: That our Saviour saith, *Suffer little children to come unto mee.* To come, not, To be brought; The act of the Parent is reputed the act of the child: That none may deride the saying of the Ancient, *Credit in alio sicut peccavit in alio,* He beleeveeth and cometh to Christ in and by his Parent, as formerly he had sinned in the loins of another.

Corollary: To conclude this first Argument, Since by that text of our Blessed Saviour, we have ground to believ, That Infants presented to him are accepted; Since, what persons might be brought to him, may be presented to his Ordinance; There being no barr put in by any word of Christ to keep them off. Nay more, Since the Faith of the Parent doth lay hold upon the promise of Grace not only for himself, but for his Infants; yea ther is ground to believ the imputation of the Parents faith to the Infant; I conclude ther is sufficient ground in Scripture to warrant Parents to present their Infants to this Ordinance, and that with expectation to obtain the Grace and Benefit of the same.



**T**His I ground upon the words of our Saviour, *Mat. 28. 0*. A charge given to the Apostles to instruct the Nations, whom they should convert to the Faith, to instruct them (I say) in the observation of all such Ordinances as Christ had commended to them. This Observation enjoyned hath speciall reference to matters of Discipline for the right Ordering and Government of the Churches and Assemblies of Christians: in which he instructed his Apostles no lesse, than in matters of Faith and Doctrine, as it is evident out of *Act. 1. 2*. where is mention made of some Commandements which Christ gave to his Apostles touching things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And it is no lesse evident by some passages in the New Testament, *ex. gr. Cor. 11. 2. 2 Thes. 2. 15. & 2 Tim. 2. 2*. that some things were delivered to the Churches, and particularly to the Ministers ther-of which were not then committed to writing, but delivered from Hand to Hand, called therefore *Traditions*. These were not matters of Doctrine, especially not Articles of Faith (None such do we acknowledge but what are delivered and set down in the writings of the Holy Apostles and Evangelists) But matters of Discipline, and Rules of good order in the Church. These Ordinances sett up and practised by th' appointment of the Apostles, are equivalent in Authority to what Christ himself hath immediatly ordained. Hence that of *St. Paul, Cor. 14. 37*. Consequently a Ground on which Conscience may build, and therby may assure it self that ther-in it doth not sinn against God. Of the which we cannot doubt, if reading that of *Cor. 11. 16*. we note what is the Question, and what is the Resolution. The Question is, Whether it were indifferent for men and women to be covered or not covered in the Church-assemblies as they listed: *St. Paul* saith No, it is not: but the Men must do so, and the Women so: Now saith he, *If any man be contentious q: d: if he will presumptuously contend against all reason that the thing is indifferent, and so he may in this use his own liberty: What then? why saith he, We have no such Custome, nor the Churches of God: q: d: The Custome of the Church which is establisht must over-rule mens froward fancies, and stand for a law to quiet the conscience of him that is willing to be satisfied. So then the Customes of the Church ordained by the Apostles are a Ground of satisfaction. Nor are they therefore in themselves less authenticall, because they are not mentioned in the text of Scripture, as prescribed by the Apostles, if yet it may appear that from them they fetch their first Originall. It is not the writing that giveth things their Authority, but the worth and credit of Him that delivereth them, tho but by word and lively voice onely. More certainty to us-ward things have by writing, but not more Authority in themselves, ex. gr. That saying of our Saviour not mentioned by the Evangelists,*

See Hooker: Ecclesiasticall  
Polity, lib. 3. sect. 14. pag. 44.  
Field on the Church, lib. 4.  
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yet now known to be his by the Allegation of St. Paul, *Act. 20. 35.* That Prophecy of *Enoch, Jude 14.* These in themselves were no less authentick truths before than after those allegations. So for Apostolicall Customs: Those mentioned in the Scripture have a more unquestioned Certainty than Traditions, but not greater Authority. Neither is this to set up Tradition (as do the Papists) to the prejudice of the Scripture; Because we admit none for Apostolicall, which either are contrary to the Scripture, or which may not by good reason from some text of Scripture be confirmed for Apostolicall. You see whether all this tenderth, viz. To make way for this Assumption: That if the Baptizing of Infants may reasonably be judged one of those Apostolicall Traditions, one of these Church-Customs, which were established in the Churches according to the commandment of Christ: Then is there sufficient Ground in Scripture to warrant the use and practise of it. And tho there be no mention of it in the text of Scripture: yet if it may appear to have been ordained by th' Apostles, and used by the Churches even from the dayes of the Apostles, why should it not be acknowledged to be the commandment of Christ, and so a Ground for Conscience to build upon. Well: But (you will say) how may it appear to have been a custome of the Churches ordained by the Apostles? Here it may be worth our Observation: That the pattern and president from whence most (if not all) of them was taken,

*Ut sciamus traditiones Apostolicas sumptas ex veteri Testamento; Quod Aaron & filii ejus atq. Levite in Templo fuerunt, hoc sibi Episcopi Presbyteri, atq. Diaconi vendicant in Ecclesia. Hieron. Epist. 13. ad Evangelium.*

was the custome of Israel in the Old Testament. It is the observation of *Jerome.* And this may be one special reason, why the Providence of God did not take so much care for the writing of every Custome and Ordinance for the Government of the Church-Assemblies in the New Testament; Because as there was not so much danger of Corruption in them as in points of Doctrine: So the President from whence they were taken being at hand, if any aberration did creep in, it might easily be amended by reducing it to the pattern. Yea, and who can tell, whether the wisdom of God did not hereby provide to uphold the credit of the Church of Israel, and the Authority of the writings of *Moses* and the Prophets against the frowardnes of some who were but too apt and ready to dis-esteem them. That the Institutions of God by *Moses* for the Church of Israel were the Pattern for the Apostolicall Traditions which were appointed for the Discipline and Order to be observed in the Christian Congregations; It will appear more evidently if we consider, that the subject matter of these Orders are, Times, Places, Persons, and the like. In all which the Apostles by the Commandment of Christ settled such Rules as were consonant to what had been formerly in the Church of Israel. That we might know, that no better Orders for the Church can be devised, than such as in Conformity to the Church of the Old Testament may justly, and without wrong to the time of Truth and



*Touching Infants Baptism.*

and Grace be framed, and as it were thence transfused. Was it not for this cause, that divers particulars which should be in the Christian Churches are prophetically described in phrases taken from the Church of Israel? See these texts: *Esa. 66. 21. & 23. Zech. 12. 16.* I said, *Without wrong to the time of Truth and Grace*, Because, as some judicall lawes were peculiar to that Nation; and to that Age of the World, and so may not be now taken into the Statutes of the Common-wealth: So some Ecclesiasticall Rites were peculiar to that Age of the Church, and may not now be taken into the Canons of the Christian Church: tho others may, which are more morall, and so more perpetuall. *Ex. gr.* In the Old Testament ther was *one day in seven* set apart to be a *Day of Holy Rest*; i.e. a time for the Assemblies and Holy Convocations meeting together for the works of Piety and Devotion. In imitation wher of th' Apostles by the Direction of our Blessed Saviour consecrated the first day of the week to the same ends and uses, and gave it that honourable name which still it beareth *The Lords Day*. Then for *Places* Israel had their Synagogues beside the Temple: And who knoweth not that even in th' Apostles times ther were places sett apart for the Assemblies to meet in, and even then began to be called *Churches*. So for *Persons* Israel had those who were sett apart to the service of the Altar and the Temple: Accordingly the Apostles ordained in severall Churches certain Elders, men sett apart and separated to the work and office of the Ministry, who by that solemn Rite and Ceremony of their Ordination might be known and acknowledged to receiv from God a speciall designation to that function, from which they might not return to secular employments and the cares of the world. The maintenance of them, doth *St. Paul* affirm to be ordained of the Lord in conformity to the Ordinance of the Old Testament, *Cor. 9. 13. 14.* And whether the subordination of Some in the Ministry to other in the same Order were not likewise an Apostolicall Institution appointed by Christ, and this also fetcht from the pattern of *Moses*, I dispute not. But this I make no question will be acknowledged by all: That the Censures of the Church: That the Directions given to the Church how to proceed in the execution of those Censures; That these, I say were received from Israel: and that not only by the Apostles appointing them, *Cor. 5. Tit. 3.* but also by our Saviour himself, *Mat. 18. 15.* That the Liberty which women have to come to the Table of the Lord must be acknowledged a Tradition of the Apostles taken from the Pattern of the Pasover. Nay yet more, The Custome of the Apostles to baptise the whol households of them that beleaved, and that immediatly upon the Conversion of the Master of the family, and his subscription to the Faith of Christ; whence they should have it, except from that like pattern and President in the Old Testament, *viz. Abraham* circumcising all the Males in his house, that very day in which the Lord made a Covenant with him, and the practise of Israel who did the like by all the male-children and infants which

they bought with their money : Whence I say that Custome should come, except from this president, I see not. That they did so is evident by the story of their Acts, and being done by them we doubt not of the lawfulness : No Revelation had they for it that is recorded : This Ground of Conformity to the Pattern of the Old Testament we find in others, and therefore conclude this also : Now them ; The issue of all returns to this text. Why this Rule should hold in so many particulars, and only fail in this point of Baptising Infants, I leave for them to give a reason, who know what difference ther is betwixt reason and absurdity. Especially since it is plain enough by the Testimony of the Ancients who lived in the next Ages after the Apostles, That this also was a Custome establisht by the Apostles.

In *Pamelius* notes on *Cyprian*, *Epl. 59.* you may find the names of the Ancients who refer it to an Apostolicall Tradition. So also doth *Augustin*, *lib. 4. De Baptismo contra Donatist. cap. 23.* And in his *Epl. 28. Ad Hyeronimum*, speaking of the 59 epistle of *Cyprian*, the Title whereof is *Ad Fidum de Infantibus Baptisandis*, he saith, *Beatus Cyprianus non aliquod decretum condens novum sed Ecclesie fidei firmissimam servans ad corrigendum eos, qui putabant ante octavum diem natiuitatis non esse parvulum baptisandum, mox natum rite baptisari cum suis quibusdam coepiscopis censuit.*

The Breviat of all this discours is this : Every Commandement of Christ is to be observed, *Mat. 28.* Infants-Baptism is the Commandement of Christ ; Every Apostolicall Institution is the Commandement of Christ : Infants Baptism is an Apostolicall Institution (therefore.) The Major is proved, *Cor. 11. 25.* and *14. 37.* and must be acknowledged except we would suspect them of fals and faithless dealing: The Minor is acknowledged by the Ancients ; And ther is great reason for it, because it doth ( as do the rest of the Rules for Order and Discipline delivered to the Church ) carry in its face and fore-head the stamp of Christs Ordinances, viz. Conformity to the Pattern of the Church of Israel.

So then ; To them who think they may triumph in that Argument produced against Infants Baptism : That, it being presupposed that the Testament of Christ is so perfect, and he so faithfull, that nothing ought to be practised of Christians, which is not therein warranted either by Precept, or Pattern : And it being assumed, that ther is neither Precept nor Pattern for this Custome ; Therefore it may not be practised, To them I say we see what Answer may be returned.

1. To the Major, Flourished with that text of *Heb. 3. 2. 6.* as *Moses* : So Christ was faithfull : Nay more, *Moses* only as a servant, but Christ as a Son ; And (therefore) his Testament as perfect, nay more perfect than that of *Moses*. True indeed ; But know we not, that the faithfulness of a man in his office is to be measured according to the intent and scope of his Office imposed ? In which if he fail and falter, then is he unfaithfull ; if not, then is he not unfaithfull tho he look not to other things, ex. gr. The Minister may be faithfull, tho he meddle not with the Sword of Justice : The Magistrate, tho he fight not with the sword of the Spirit.



Spirit. So then, what was the office of *Moses*? and what of *Christ*? The Office of *Moses* was to settle the Common-wealth, and the Nationall Church of Israel: The Office of *Christ* was to make Reconciliation betwixt God and man, to work out the Redemption of Mankind. It was fitt that *Moses* should sett down particular laws for the Common-wealth, and Ordinances for the Church: Neither of these did pertain to the Office of *Christ*; yet by his Apostles and their successors in severall Ages doth he provide whatsoever is necessary for the welfare and good order of the Church of the New Testament: But in his own person, and by himself he established the Covenant of Grace, ordained the Seals ther-of, sett up a Ministry, gave to them the word of life and salvation, and pointed to them a pattern for good Order and Government, and so was faithfull in his house as a Son, and worthy of more honour than *Moses*. This for the Major.

2. To the Minor: We grant, That neither Precept nor Pattern formall and explicite is to be found in the books of the New Testament for Infants baptising, *i.e.* There is no Precept that saith, Go and baptise Infants; no more is ther any Precept to baptise Women; nor to observ the Lords day as a Christian Sabbath: Ther is no text that saith, The Children and Infants of this or that man were baptised; Nor is ther any text that saith, Such a woman was admitted to the Table of the Lord. But we say, that both Precept and Pattern virtuall and implicit may be found to warrant it, The which if found is not to be neglected.

*Precept Virtuall and implicit.*

Here we pitch upon the continuation of the Custome in Israel to present their Infants to the Sacrament of initiation, and we frame the Argument thus. What was instituted in the Old Testament, and not repealed in the New, nor is any way incompatible with the state of the Church in the New Testament, that is understood to be continued, and commended to the practise of the Christian Church: But that Infants should be initiated and admitted into the Covenant of Grace by a Sacrament, was commanded in the Old Testament, neither is it repealed in the New, nor incompatible with the state of the New Testament (therefore.) That it is not repealed is thence confirmed, Because in the Substitution of that new Sacrament of Initiation, ther is no particular exception taken against Infants, (as before was noted in the first Argument. That it is not incompatible with the state of the Church in the New Testament is thus further confirmed.

1. The Infants of Christians are as capable of present incorporation into *Christ*, and of admission into the Covenant of Grace, as were the infants of the Jews: And if so, who shall barr them (whom God hath not barred) from the Seal of the Covenant. 2. The Infants of Christians have as much need of the Communion and Participation in the Covenant of Grace as had the Infants of the Jews: And their Parents as much need of a Ground of comfort, as touching the Remedy

of that which maketh them stand in need of the Covenant of Grace and the Benefits thereof as the Parents of Jewish Infants: If so? who shall think that God hath not provided for them so well as for the other. If he hath not, how hath Grace abounded in the New Testament, when in this particular it is much restrained both to Believers, and to their Infants: But if he hath, who shall forbid them that, which God hath provided for them?

1. That the Infants of Christians are as capable: is proved by that of *Cor. 7. 14.* *They are holy:* And what is that? Ther be who gloss upon the text and say, That children are Holy indeed, but how? As the wife not otherwise, *viz.* As she is sanctified to the use of her Husband, so the children to the use of their Parents: But they falsifie the text: For the text saith not of the wife, She is sanctified to her husband, but *by* her Husband, *in rā dādel*, Nor of the children it is said as of the wife, *Hyiasas, is sanctified*, but they are *ā Via, Holy*, which is more fully, and more emphaticall. Others shift it off with this: That the children are said to be Holy, because, Notwithstanding the difference of Religion in the Parents, yet the children are *legitimate*. This is further of than the former; Nor can it stand, except this be presupposed, That all the children of Heathens are illegitimate: No more than the former can stand without this being presupposed; That neither wife, nor children of Pagans are sanctified to their use. Wherefore, ther is nothing left, but that they are said to be *Holy*, by the Holines of the Covenant, and sanctified with a federall sanctification: The which is so much the more manifest, because it appeareth by the context. That the pretence of them, who did repudiate their wives for their infidelity, was a fear, lest the infidelity of the wife should deprive the Husband of his interest in the Covenant of Grace which hee had imbraced: and that his conjunction with her should rend him of (as did the Sin of Fornication, *cap. 6. 15.*) from Communion with Christ. St. Paul denyeth this, and sheweth that rather the Faith of the Believers should so farre preponderate and prevail as to draw the other parties also after a sort within the Covenant, So that the unbelieving wife is sanctified and accounted as one interested in the Covenant by the Husband: His reason is, because otherwise the children of such should be accounted *Unclean*, or altogether barred from the Covenant, wher-as now they are Holy, *i.e.* Heirs of the Covenant, and admitted to the Seals ther-of. *Admitted*, I say, For this is worthy our observation: That suppose any of the Corinthians would have been so wilfull to doubt of this Medium, and deny th'Argument of St. Paul: what is ther to convince the Gainsayer, but only the practise of Israel continued in the Christian Churches, *viz.* That the children of one believing Parent are admitted to the Seals of the Covenant. This must of Necessity be presupposed, else doth the Argument fall to the ground and overthrow it self. To say, That it resteth upon the Authority of th'Apostles affirmation, is not sufficient: in as much as he doth not positively set it down as a thing



thing to be learned, (as he had done the former point, The wife is sanctified) but brings it in as a Reason to confirm that former point: And we know, that the Reason of a Position is alway presupposed, as a thing already yielded and confessed.

2. That the Infants of Christians have as much need of partaking in the Covenant of Grace, as had the Jewish Infants, is thence confirmed: Because, *That which is born of the Flesh, is flesh.* Naturall corruption is common to all. Why was Circumcision ordained, but that ther-by the Uncircumcision of the Heart might be taken away: that the Corruption of Nature might bee cured, and the Guilt of that first sinn cut off from the Israel of God: That *Abraham* by Faith apprehending the promise of God might ther-in have a Ground of comfort to himself in respect of his Sonn, *viz.* That tho he had begotten him in his own likeness, and had been a mean to convey unto him the Guilt and Filth of Originall sinn: yet now by the mercy of God, he was provided of a Remedy for that Malady of his child, and using that Sacrament in Faith, he might comfortably assure himself that the Remedy should prevail against the Malady: And is not this Ground of comfort needfull also for Christians? Surely they are deceived, who either deny the propagation of originall sinn to Infants; or dream of any Universal Demolition of it by the Death of Christ without the particular Application of his Blood by the Sacrament of the Gospell. If there be no such Malady, no such Guilt in our Infants, how cometh it to pass that they dy? Is ther any place for Death in Mankind, wher ther is no sinn at all? If the Beasts decay and dy by reason of their naturall mortality, yet we know that sinn it was which brought Death upon *Adam* and his Posterity. Where ther is no sinn inherent, Death can claim no interest in that party: Wher Death seizeth upon man, we must not deny sinn, some sin ther must be: Actually, ther is none in these Infants. Not yet have they sinned after the *Similitude of Adams transgression, viz.* by listening to the Tentation of Satan; and therefore it is Originall Guilt and corruption which is in them: If the Disease be in their Nature; Is ther not need of a Remedy? Had the Infants of the Jews a Remedy, and is ther none provided for the Infants of Christians? Is ther a Remedy provided for them, and a ground of comfort for their Parents, and shall it be denied, and they debarred?

*Objection.* The force of this Argument, some think to elude by denying Circumcision to be a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, and consequently no Remedy against that originall Malady wher-of we speak: We oppose that honourable Elogie of it, *Rom. 4. 11.* The Apostle termeth it, *A Seal of the Righteousnes of Faith*: They answer, it was a seal of *Abrahams* Faith, not in the Promise of the Messiah, and the Covenant of Grace, but in the promise of a Neumerous Offspring, *That he should be the Father of many Nations.* This was (say they) that part of Gods Covenant with *Abraham*, which was sealed by Circumcision:

*A Moderate Answer to the Question,*

*A fleshly Covenant had a fleshly Seal: But in this Answer we find a twofold Ignorance betrayed. 1. The mis-interpretation of the Phrase: The Righteousness of Faith: A phrase peculiar to St. Paul by which is intimated not the Act of Faith, but the Benefit ther-of. The phrase is equivalent to, and to be expounded by that of Rom. 9. 30. & 10. 6. The Righteousness which is by faith, and that also, Rom. 3. 21. & 4. 3. The Righteousness of God. Both which are joined in one, Rom. 9. 30. The Righteousness of God which is by Faith: and thereby is signified the Benefit of imputed Righteousness which God bestoweth on Believers for their Justification: This benefit God having bestowed upon Abraham, did seal it up to Him afterward by Circumcision, which is therefore called, Not the Seal of his Faith, but the Seal of the Righteousness, i.e. of Justification which cometh by Faith and not by Works. 2. Another point of ignorance, is in dis-joyning those things which ought not to be dis-joined, viz. the Covenant of Grace, and the Promise of a Numerous off-spring. Is it not evident that in Gen. 17. there is speciall mention of the Covenant of Grace, viz. I will be the God of thee, and thy seed after thee: and then followeth, Then shalt therefore keep my Covenant, thou and thy seed— This is my Covenant. Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. Why should Circumcision be restrained to the Promise of a Numerous of-spring, when the text doth not restrain it? If any reply, That in Gen. 15. where the Righteousness of Faith is mentioned, to which the Apostle alludeth, there is only mention made of a Numerous of-spring promised. Be it so: But that of Calvin is sound, who saith,*

*In dubium est asserimus quod Christi-  
anae quoque; promissiones Abrahae  
ad Deum primo illius fuisse appen-  
dices. Ergo cum audiret Abraham.  
Erit servitus tua sicut erant in vi-  
vis hoc verbo non substitit, sed ipsum,  
patet includi in gratia Adoptio-  
nis tamquam partem in toto, Calv. in  
Gen. 17.*

*That whatsoever promises God did give to Abra-  
ham, they were Appendices of that first promise  
made to Him: and so this of a numerous of-  
spring, was by Faith received as a fruit of that  
first Grace he bestowed on Him viz. His Adopti-  
on; Nay more, That Promise of a Numerous of-  
spring, that he should be the Father of many Na-  
tions; Was it fulfilled in the children of the flesh  
only, or in the children of the Promise also? And*

*how came he to be the Father of those children, but by Faith in the Covenant of  
Grace?*

*Conclude (therefore) That Circumcision was a Seal of the Covenant of Grace;  
A Remedy of that Dil-ease which is derived from Father to Son by Propaga-  
tion. Which being in the Posterity of Believing Christians no less than in the  
Posterity of Believing Jewes: It followeth that these have as much need as the  
other: And being Holy by virtue of their Parents interest in the Covenant, are as  
capable of this Benefit as the other were. Consequently that the implantation  
of Infants into that Mystricall Body of Christ by a Sacrament is not incompatible  
with the state of the Church in the New Testament. And if not so: Since it is*



not repealed by Christ and his Apostles: we conclude, That there is a Precept  
virtuall and implicit: And tho it be not said in direct terms, Go and baptise Be-  
leevers and their Children, yet in that it is said, Circumcise them, their Baptism  
is included: so much the more: Because it will appear that there is also for the  
Baptising of Infants.

*Pattern virtuall and Implicit.*

This is in the Baptising of whole Families upon the conversion of the Masters  
ther-of. The whole Households of *Lydia, Crispus, Cornelius*, and others were bap-  
tised: To say, that in them there might be no children, because none are mentio-  
ned, is to speak against all sense and reason. As well may it be said there were no  
servants, and so make up a Family of I know not how few. What say we to  
those *three thousand souls* mentioned, *Acts 2.* which were added to the Church in  
one day: Is it probable that they were all present at the Sermon, and converted  
to the Faith by that Sermon, it being in a private House? Is it not more proba-  
ble, that the Men being present and converted, they brought also their Families  
to be baptised, which they might well do, because they heard *St. Peter* say: *The  
Promise is made to you and to your children*: So that the totall summe of men,  
women and children might be 3000. souls: Some such thing doubtless is inti-  
mated in that phrase, 3000. souls: answerable to that in the story of *Gen. 46. ver. 27*  
*All 7. 14. All that came down into Egypt with Jacob were 70 souls.* Souls, i.e.  
persons, men, women, and children: And here doubtless the course and practice  
of the Converts was answerable to that in *Gen. 17.* No sooner is the Covenant  
made with *Abraham*, but he circumciseth all the Males in his house both young  
and old: So doubtless, No sooner is the Covenant of Grace ratified betwixt  
Christ and the Beleeving Parents by Baptism, but the Household is also accoun-  
ted Holy and so baptised. Doubtless, what *St. Peter* said to them in *Acts 2. The  
Promise is made to you and to your children*: The same did *St. Paul* preach to the  
Gentiles when they were converted, that they might know the large bounty of  
God to them and theirs in the Covenant of Grace: And how should they con-  
firm this to them but by baptising their children? Take away this, and you leav  
open a wide gapp to an Objection which is not easily answered: For they might  
object: What tell you us of the Grace of God in Christ, of the super-abundance  
of that Grace? Do we not see the contrary? This is nothing answerable to that  
of *Abraham* and *Israel*? They by their Faith received a Benefit for their children,  
yea their servants. Not so here: We our selves per-aventure may be the better  
for our Faith: But our children remain still as they were, strangers to the Cove-  
nant. Will you imagine the Apostle to reply: Nay, but the Promise is to you  
and your children. So that when they come to beleeve they also may be admitted;  
How justly might the Objector rejoin: what great priviledge is this? So may  
the very Heathen, all that are a farre off, when they beleeve. If this be all that we

gain; Our children, notwithstanding our Faith are in no better condition than the Heathen themselves, Nothing so good as the children of the Jews: And so the great boast of super-abundant Grace falls to the ground. Thus we see good Reason to acknowledge this Custome of baptising Infants to be warranted both by Precept and Pattern, tho not formall and explicite; yet virtuall and implicit; And that with so great light and evidence from Scripture, that greater in that kind cannot be expected.

Before I proceed to an other Argument: Let me improve this further, That Custome and Practise of the Church may well be presumed to be Apostolicall, which is so consonant to the text of Scripture, that it doth readily illustrate the text: and openeth a door of light to understand the same: Such is the Custome of Infants Baptised therefore. That which being granted giveth light: and which being denyed doth leave the text under such a cloud of obscurity, that it is not easily understood how it may pass for Truth: This must be granted to open a door of light to understand the text of Scripture. Now then, suppose this Act of the Apostles baptising Infants: we easily see how 3000. souls may be added to the Church in one day, notwithstanding the Sermon were in a privat house: We see how St. Peter might confirm their Beleeif in this, *The Promise is made to you, and to your children*: even the Promise of super-abundant Grace: We see how St. Paul might urge this, *your children are Holy*: But take away the supposition of this Custome, and none of these texts are so easie to be understood. Consequently: it is more than probable, that even this Custome of Baptising Infants was instituted and ordained in the Churches by th' Apostles: and that according to the commandement of Christ.

*Sicut nunc in ecclesia manet Constitutio saluatoris dicentis, Nisi quis renatus fuerit --- Ita sacratissime in lege fuerat praeceptum, ut natus puer nisi die circumcideretur octavo, exterminaretur anima ejus de populo suo. Ambros. Epist. 33. Ad Demetriadem p. 132.*

Add unto all that hath been sayd that of St. Ambrose: who sets these two as paralell: the law of God, touching Circumcision, *The soul who is not circumcised, shall be cut off from his people*: and the Sanction of our Saviour: *Except a man bee born again of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*. That this text is to be understood of Baptism, as a mean and cause of Regeneration, Not so principall as the Spirit: yet so instrumentall to the Spirit, that wher it may be had, wee have no ground of Faith to beleeve that the Spirit will work without it: This is I say the constant and consentient judgement of all the Ancients, and most of our modern Divines; Some few only excepted, who to avoid the Popish Tenet, touching the absolute necessity of Baptism, did fly to a Metaphor. And it may be confirmed for Truth, out of the Text it self; if we note well, *To whom*, and *upon what* occasion the words were spoken: viz. To *Nicodemus*, upon occasion of his timorousnes: A Disciple of Christ, he was willing



willing to be, but loth to profess it openly by being baptised. To him is the commination directed: and therefore the words must be understood of Baptism: Now then consider well, whether ther be any ground sufficient to keep of Infants from this Ordinance? Any ground (I say) which may secure the conscience of not having sinned against the souls of our Infants, if by our default they dy without this seal of the Covenant, and so loof the Benefit ther-of? Have not Infants need of Christ, and the Application of his Blood for the washing their souls from sinn? Is ther any Hope of Salvation without Christ? Is ther any other way revealed, by which any may have part in Christ, but by his Ordinances? Is ther any other Ordinance by which Infants may be made partakers of Christ and the Covenant of Grace except Baptism? Is ther any text of Scripture that hath peremptorily barred their Admittance? Or is ther any thing required of them that must be baptised, the want wher-of may be a barr to Infants? Thou doubtest, because ther is no text that mentioneth either Precept or Pattern, and without a text, thou darest not venture: 'Tis well: But when ther is such a fearfull sentence, that runns in such generall terms as doth comprehend Infants also: and the Danger of Omission is so great: Why art thou not more cautelous on the safer side? Why dost thou not as well call for a direct text to barr them? or a direct Reason from Scripture, which may be equivalent? Is ther any text that saith, None may be baptised, that do not Beleeve? or that saith Infants for want of Actuall faith may not be baptised? Dost thou not see Infants Circumcised yea by commandment? Dost thou not hear the text that saith, *Children are Holy*? And are ther so many Probabilities that by th'Apostles themselves Infants were baptised? And wilt thou rather hazard the soul of thy child, than lay hold upon the Covenant for thy seed, nay for thy self? and that only upon a fear, and a doubt of unlawfulness; yea such a doubt that hath no surer ground either in Scripture or Reason to countenance it, than the contrary resolution?

Here is then the Case: if these Grounds formerly mentioned prove good, as ther is great probability: Then thou presenting thine Infant to Baptism building upon these grounds, thou hast saved thy self and thine Infant: but forbearing and keeping him of, thou sinnest against thine own soul and his also: Again, if those grounds should not prove good: yet hast thou not wronged thine Infant, nor thine own self: Because, upon such probabilities as are next door to an Evident Demonstration, thou hast done that which is intended for the Glory of God, and the Good of the Infant. Thou hast not transgressed against any Precept, no nor any light of Reason which might justly withhold thee from seeking the Good of thine Infant at the Hands of Christ in this Ordinance.

I conclude therefore, That ther is sufficient Ground in Scripture to warrant the Conscience of a Christian to bring his Infants to this Sacrament of Baptism,







his Gospel, He must be pronounced Anathema : This is the Discipline of the Church : and good is the Reason ther-of, 1. *In respect of the Person Delinquent* : That by the destruction of the Flesh the Spirit may be saved : This was an wholsome severity, a Church-punishment, inflicted as a means appointed of God to reduce and reclaim those who were not desperately given up to a reprobate sense. 2. *In respect of the Congregation*, that others might hear and fear : That others might shun familiarity with them for fear of infection by them. 3. *In respect of them that are without the Church* : That the name of the Lord might not be blasphemed by them : but that they might see and know, that as the Profession, so the practise of the Church is a constant care of holines. Nor will the Church of God indure it, that any of their Society shall say one thing and do another, talk holines, and live profanely : If any do forget himself, and conform to the Men of the World in exorbitant courses, he shall be shutt out from among them, and cut off from their Communion ; that so the whol Assembly may even in the ey of the world be found in some measure conformable to the Holines of Christ their Head. For these Reasons some are to be shutt out and sequestred. The first and second Reasons are perpetuall, and press the Execution of this point of Discipline at all times : The third was more urgent in the times of the first Plantation of the Church : And in that respect it was ( as I conceiv ) that the Primitive Churches were so severe and rigid, even to an over-great measure of extremity till experience taught them the Necessity of some more mildnes and moderation. But yet alway ther is use of this point of Discipline, to seperate and cut off scandalous persons : that so the members of the Church may be secured from infection, and the whol Body from scandal and imputation.

3. *The Neglect of the Church-Officers in doing their duty, is a sinn that may expose the whol Congregation to the judgements of God* : Their office it is to watch over the Holy things of God, that they be not laid open to contempt, either by admitting them that are not fitted, or by not sequestring them that ought to be sequestred : And their Negligence is a provoking sinn : was it not upon this ground, that the Congregation doth smart in the case of *Achan* ? The Elders and officers were not so carefull as they should have been. To which if ther be added also the Neglect of inferiour persons in doing what they ought ( it is their part to be eys and ears to the Governours, informing them of what is amiss : yea, and in a dutifull way to admonish them of their duty, and intreat their diligent circumspection, which if they do not, much more if they do approve of their slackness, and like of them the better, because they are not so officious. ) What wonder if this Neglect of the Governour prove the destruction of the whol Congregation : understand this in respect of temporall judgements : God to shew his just indignation against sin : and to teach all and every one to have a care of others, both to greiv for them, and to admonish them, doth for the sin of some one, especially if



if an eminent person, cause the whole to smart under the Rod of some common Calamity. This also is not denied.

These things being premised, as things granted, and not at all questioned.

The Scruple doth ly in this one particular. Whether the sin of the unworthy and wicked person, intruding himself into the company of them that draw neer to the Table of the Lord: and the sin of the Church-officers who should (but do not) exclude him, whether this sin of theirs defile the Conscience of Him (a private Christian) who hath no further communion with them, save only that he is in their company, and they in his, when he goeth up to the Table of the Lord: He neither approveth of them, nay is grieved for the dis-order; Whether is he defiled?

To this I answer Negatively: It is not (alway) sinfull for a private Christian to receive the Sacrament in the company of them that are unworthy Communicants, nay worthy of Excommunication. *Not alway*, I say, Because I list not to plead the cause of them, who for some private respects do voluntarily chuse the Society of some wicked persons, when it is in their liberty to make a better choice, But where it is not: As it is not in the choice of Parishioners to refuse their Parish Church to which by the just law of the Magistrate they are bound for Order sake: Now that in this case it is not sinfull: I prove by these Arguments.

*The first Argument.*

**V**hat no text of Scripture hath manifested to be unlawfull, that is not sinfull: For in as much as *Sin is the Transgression of the law*, what is not unlawfull, that is not sinfull: And if the text of Scripture doth not manifest a thing unlawfull, who shall dare to do it. That no text of Scripture hath manifested it unlawfull for a private Christian in this case to come in the company of the unworthy, it is evidenced by this, That there is neither any text of Prohibition to forbid it, nor any text of Reprehension that hath blamed those that have done it: Consequently it is not by text of Scripture manifested to be unlawfull, and therefore not sinfull. As we conclude that lawfull, that by text is either commanded or commended. So that, unlawfull, that is either prohibited or reprov'd.

1. No text of Scripture hath forbidden it.

Not that of *Cor. 5. 11*. No not in that new translation, which some put in capital letters, as if there were some great mystery in it: **NOT TO BE MIXT TOGETHER**. Truth it is, there is a Prohibition directed to the Church of *Corinth*, and it pertaineth to all the members ther-of: The Prohibition is to them, Not to keep company with scandalous Christians, no not to eat with such a one. But it is manifest that this Prohibition is not touching *Sacred* but *civill* Society: That company-keeping is in the Citty, not in the Church: That eating is at their own Table, not at the Table of the Lord. Th' Apostle had written to them a  
former

former Epistle, Not to keep company with Fornicators and other scandalous persons: Fain he would that Christians should not only forbear such sinfull courses, but even the company of them that were therewith-all defiled: This his Epistle and his charge in it, he doth now interpret. shewing, That he did not intend to forbid them all company or society with those of that ill-name which were not of the Church; This had been to have shut them up in a cloister, to have banished them out of the world, to have imposed upon them an impossibility; so St. *Chrysostome* you must seek another world to live in, seeing the case of Gods people in this world, is as of Roses among thorns, they cannot but live among the wicked: But, that, if ther were any professed Christians, that yet had not reformed those evill courses, but still lived in the usuall practise of them, with such a one they must have no familiarity, *No not to eat with them*. So then, The eating forbidden is such as is not forbidden in Relation to men of the world: Now with the men of the world they never had any company at the Table of the Lord: Consequent-ly, the text doth not respect that sacred Communion, nor their joining with the scandalous in that sacred Action. This phrase *Eat not with him*, is the same in effect with that of 2 *Job. 10. Receive him not into your House*: It was altogether unlawfull for the *Corinths* to invite such a scandalous Brother to their houses, or to shew him any courtesie; yea, I suppose the phrase doth reach further, even to refuse his invitation, *q. d.* Neither invite him to eat with you, nor accept of any invitation to eat with him; that so all shew of Familiarity betwixt him and you may be avoided. Add this; It cannot be understood of that holy Society which is among Christians at the Lords Table, because that *μὴ διὰ σωμαθείην*, *No not to eat*, intimateth the least familiarity that may be; For so is the Argument, *μὴ συναναστασθῆναι μὴ διὰ σωμαθείην*, Not to keep company, no nor to eat: But in that Holy society which Christians have one with another in the House of God, this *τὸ σωμαθεῖν*, To eat together is the greatest: Whence it is that the aggravation of the Punishment of obstinate persons doth run in a contrary course, *μὴ συναναστασθῆναι, μὴ διὰ σωματομυγνῆναι*; they are first shut out from the Table of the Lord. and afterward from the Houses and Tables of Christians. So then, this text of *Cor. 5.* not respecting the familiarity and company of them that come to the Lords Table, cannot be alledged to prove it unlawfull, and sinfull for a Christian to be found in company, and to go along with the wicked to the Table of the Lord.

Nor that of 2 *Thess. 3. 14.* The words are these: *If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, Note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.* Here it is forbidden to have company with a brother that walketh disorderly: So in *vers. 6. viz.* He speaks of them that were idle and busi-bodyes, *vers. 11.* The Christians of *Thessalonica* were most of them Artisans and Labourers; and for those to live idly, out of a Calling was a dis-orderly walking: and those



those the Apostle would have to be punished: The punishment is set down, *ver. 6. cōmūdy*: To withdraw themselves from him; and *οὐ συνευρισκόντες*. To keep no company with him: Now this company cannot be understood of the holy Communion, because it is subjoined to the verb *οὐ συνευρισκόντες*, *Note that man*, which *οὐ συνευρισκόντες* by divers Godly and Learned is interpreted the Act of Excommunication. *q. d.* Excommunicate him, and have no company with Him: Put him out of the Church: yea, out of all Civill familiarity: Neither invite him to house, nor willingly be yee found in his company. Which is yet more manifest; if we consider, that this *οὐ συνευρισκόντες*, is to set such a note upon Him as may make him ashamed: Now that could not be by forbearing to communicate in his company. In very deed who should forbear? Is not the Precept directed to the whol Church? Should they all forbear the Communion, and leave him alone at it? *Ridiculum*. No, they must all perform their duty, each in his place: The Church-officers must set a note upon him: *i. e.* Denounce him as an unworthy member of the Church, unfit to be admitted, not only to the Table of the Lord, but even unfit to be admitted to any familiarity and society with them: The Church-members must do accordingly, *i. e.* forbear all commerce and communion with him; they must shun him as a Pest and a Plague-sore. So then, neither of these two texts relating properly and directly to the Table of the Lord can be understood, as prohibiting private Christians to communicate in the company of them that ought not to be admitted. *Sublato subjecto quaestiois, tollitur & accidentia*. Much less those other texts which are by some added *ex abundanti* to fill up room rather then to confirm that cause, *viz.* *Act. 2. 40. Eph. 5. 11. Thes. 5. 22. & 2 Tim. 3. 2. 5.* For why? When St. Peter saith, *Save your selves from this untoward generation*. Doth he speak of misbehaviour'd Christians? or rather of misbeleeving Jews? And is it a work of Darknes? Is it an *Appearance of evill* to attend on Gods ordinance? If it be not so well performed by these wicked ones as it ought; yet is it not to be accounted evill. Surely it is rather a work of light, and an Appearance of good, how-soever to the wicked and unprepared nothing profitable, is ther no difference betwixt what is evill in the Substance of the Act, and what is so only by Accident, *viz.* through some defect of the Actor. *From such turn away* (saith the Apostle.) What then? Must I therefore turn away from the Communion if they come to it? No: but in the course of my conversation I must have nothing to do with them: Nay more, that text doth not necessarily prove that I must turn away such from the Holy Communion; much less doth it prove that I must turn away my self because of them. None of those texts do speak home to the point, least of all that of

*2 Cor. 6. 17.* This text doth indeed call for separation: but from whom? Collect this out of the Coherence. In *ver. 14. Be not* (saith he) *unequally yoked with unbelievers*, *Not yoked se.* in society and partnership of the shop and flock: in

Cohabitation and company of the Bed and Board. Thus to be joined in society with Infidels he counteth a yoke, an unequall yoke; and would have them take heed of it. His Argument is taken from the unequall condition of them: To do this is to couple Righteousnes with Unrighteousnes, Light with Darknes; Christ with Belial; the Temple of God with Idols: things that can have no commerce together, nor communion: And then inferreth, *Wherefore come out from among them, and be yee separate (saith the Lord) and touch not the unclean thing, &c.* The Church of *Corinth* lived in the midst of Infidels: No wonder therefore if the Apostle call upon them to separate from such, to take heed of communion with them, especially in that which he had taxed under the name of Idolatry, and here under that phrase, *Touch not the unclean thing*; so their presence at the Idolatrous feasts, This in speciall would he have them forbear; Now I pray, what is this to the presence of the worthy receiver in the company of unworthy Communicants at the Table of the Lord? Is not he blind that seeth not a large difference, and that the one doth not draw on the other to be unlawfull? Will it follow, that because the Corinthians who were present with Idolaters at their Idol-feasts, are said to have communion with Idolaters, that therefore he who is in the company of wicked men in their approaching to the Table of the Lord, doth partake with them in their wickednes? If so: Then as the Corinthians by so doing are said to *touch the unclean thing*: So also these Receivers of whom wee speak, by so doing do also touch the unclean thing. And shall we call the Table of the Lord an unclean thing? Is it also an Idol? Ther is a text in *Hagg. 2. ver. 12-14.* which had wont to be alledged to prove that wicked men defile the Ordinances of God. But if so, it is but to themselves not to others: As wholsome meat received into a corrupted stomack turns into noxious humours: and the same word that is to some the savour of life, is to others (in whom it is not mixed with faith) the savour of Death; to these, but not to others in their company: Ther is an error in these mens understanding: They conceiv, that meerly to be in company with the wicked, is to communicate with them in their wickednes: They are deceived. To communicate in wickednes, is to join fellowship in the pursuit of wicked intentions: *ex. gr.* When wicked men take in hand a wicked purpose (to honour an Idol, to set up profaness; to act in the works of darknes, murder, adultery, theevery, perjury, &c. Then to join society with them wittingly, is to communicate with them in wickednes. *Wittingly*, I say: For those 200. that in the simplicity of their heart went along with *Absalom* to *Hebron*, did not communicate with him in his treason tho they went in company. But now, Will any man of wit or reason say, That these wicked men, and these scandalous Brethren, who come to the Table of the Lord unworthily, that they go about a wicked purpose and intention? surely, what faultines soever is in them, by which they barr themselves from the Benefit of the Lords Table;



Table; yet the thing that they go about, in it selfe is good, a duty enjoined, yea so acknowledged by them, in which respect it is that they address themselves unto it: And therefore they that go with them to this, do communicate with them in Good; because they do willingly join their company in the prosecution of those good intentions. So then none of these texts do speak to the point.

*Object.* But it will be replied: That tho the letter of the text doth only look upon civill society prohibiting that as unlawfull: yet by consequence it will follow; That if the one, yea that which is the less be unlawfull, then the other, yea much more that that is the greater is unlawfull; *If no Civill, much less any sacred Society.* True: but then, you must presuppose the same power of Admitting and separating: If I may not admit him to mine house, much less may I admit him to the Table of the Lord: supposing me to have the power of Admitting. I grant, that for them that have power to keep him out, the Argument holdeth. The Church-officers of *Corinth* and *Thessalonica* were bound to make that inference upon the text of *St. Paul*; And if they did not, I acknowledge them to have sinned. But the case is otherwise in this matter: This doth not prove, that every particular Christian in either of those Churches did sinn in comming to the Table of the Lord while these were not removed, if not they, then neither is it sinn in any of our Church-members to present himself at the Holy Table, to partake of those holy Mysteries in the company of them that are unworthy. For why? The Table is the Lords: it is he that maketh the feast, that inviteth the guests, and bids them welcome: Shall any that is invited and prepared yet abstain because of anothers unpreparednes? Tell mee I pray you: Did that text of the Apostle *Cor. 5. 11.* forbid any Christian to eat at another mans table, supposing that this other man hath also invited a scandalous Christian? I trow not. By vertue of that text I may not (as before was said) invite the scandalous brother, I may not accept of his invitation: But if a third man invite us both, this text doth not bind me to refuse my friends curtesie because of such company. If not so: much less to refuse the invitation of God calling me to feast at his holy Table. Did any of those guests in the Parable *Mat. 22.* turn back when they saw the Man who had not on his wedding garment, and consequently in the state of manifest unworthines and unpreparednes? Did they I say turn back? or is any of them checked for coming in his company? Which brings on the second part of the first Argument, *viz.* That as this case is not prohibited, so neither is it reprehended.

2. No text of Scripture hath reprehended it.

Not that in *Cor. 5. 1. 2.* Ther indeed he taxeth the Church of *Corinth*, that they suffered the incestuous person still to remain in Communion with them. He blameth them that they were *puffed up*, i.e. they sought to hide and excuse the fault glorying in the excellency of the mans gifts (for it is conceived that he was a Teacher among them, and that for the eminency of his gifts, they were un-

willing to separate him from the Congregation. ) This he chargeth upon them : *and that they had not mourned* : What is meant by this mourning is not easily to determine : That is not to be doubted which some say, *viz.* That ther is good reason why we should mourn for the sin of others ( as did those in *Ezek. 9. 4.* who are ther-upon marked in the forehead to be preserved from the common destruction ) good reason, I say, both because hereby there groweth a scandall upon the Congregation ; as also, because the sinns of others do indanger us ( except we mourn for them ) in respect of temporall things both goods and life, and all : This I say is not doubted, yet I rather lean to the opinion of them who understand this mourning, of the indicting a solemn day of Fasting and mourning for the excommunication of that incestuous person : The custom then was to denounce the sentence of Excommunication in a solemn maner, with the generall mourning and lamentation of the whol assembly invited ther-unto by appointing a time for that Action, So much the learned do observ out of this text, *Cor. 5. 2. & 2 Cor. 12. 0* . And this is that that I conceiv the Apostle meaneth in saying, *Iee have not mourned, that he might be put away from among you.* And was this the Duty of every particular person in the Congregation? The Epistle indeed is written to the whol Church of *Corinth*, & respecteth every particular person in the Congregation : But I suppose that *St. Paul* doth not intend to accuse every particular member either of being puffed, or of not mourning : much less to injoin every man to put on that solemn maner of mourning by indictment of the day, and denouncing the sentence of Excommunication against him.

To beleeve that whatsoever is spoken to the whol Congregation may be executed by every particular member ther-of, is in effect to take away distinction of Orders and officers in the Church and Common-wealth : When God saith *Deut. 13.* *That intisers to Idolatry must be stoned to death* ; Doth he intend to put every man in Authority to see the execution done immediately ; Nay, in case the Magistrate neglect his office, doth this warrantise every man to put the law in execution ? Doth not this law of God rather intend that execution pass on legally by the hand of the Officers deputed to hear and determin of such matters ? When *St. Paul* writing to the Collossians, *Col. 4. 17.* putteth in this exhortation, *And say to Archippus, Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it* ; Doth he hereby authorise every Collossian to lay this charge upon the Minister ? Or is it not rather to be presented to him by the hands of them that were in place and authority ? So neither in *Cor. 5.* He that was not puffed up, was not guilty of communicating in that sin. And suppose that the Church-officers had not done their duty in removing the incestuous person ( as perhaps they did not remove some other scandalous brethren from the Church-society ) ther is nothing in the text to lead us to beleeve that *St. Paul* intended a reproof to them that were *not puffed*, but indeed *mourned* privately in their



their devotions to see such disorder, a reproof I say to them, for that they did not with-draw themselves from the Communion of the Church in their approaching to the Table of the Lord.

*Cor. 10.* He reprehendeth them who held Communion with Idolaters in their Idol-feasts: and in *Cor. 11.* them who profaned the Table of the Lord by their unreverent carriage and behaviour at it: using many Arguments to disswade them from that evil, and to perswade them to a reformation: yet doth he not either mention this as a motive, that they did bring sin upon others, or admonish others to forbear communion with them till these things were reformed, least ther-by their conscience should be defiled, and the ordinance of God become unprofitable to them. Yet this had been a very powerfull Argument of persuasion both to the one & to the other, and doubtless had ther been truth in it, *St. Paul* would not have forgotten it. The unworthy receiver (saith the Apostle) *eath and drinketh damnation to himself*: He saith not, to himself and others: I grant, it doth not follow from the silence of the Apostle, that his sin cannot hurt another beside himself: But this doth follow; That if to him that hath prepared himself ther had been any danger at all from the presence of others who are unworthy, this had been a fit place for *St. Paul* to have mentioned it. Which since he hath not, we conclude, that he who hath examined himself, hath done enough to secure him from the danger of eating and drinking damnation to himself, When the Apostle doth set down the causes of that plague that was among the *Corinthians*, doth he mention any such thing as their presence with the wicked in the Duty of Receiving? Or doth the text any wher at all imply it?

We find in *Ezek. 22. 26.* a complaint of the Priests that they had *violated*, and offered violence to the law: that they had *profaned the Holy things* of God: that they *put no difference between the Holy and Profane, nor shewed difference between the clean and unclean.* And in *Jer. 15. 9.* the Lord by shewing the Prophet what he would have him to doe, intimateth a Reprehension of the false-prophets who had not done their duty, *viz. To separate the precious from the vile.* But if we look upon the places and weigh them well, we may observ that both texts have reference to the Duty of Teachers and Officers in the Church: They must indeed put a difference betwixt things holy and profane, they must separate the precious from the vile, pronouncing mercy to the one, denouncing judgement to the other: admitting the one to the Holy things, keeping of the other: This must they do, and if not, they deserve a just reproof. But what is this to the cause in hand? Doth this countenance the course of such who condemn those that do not put themselves from the Holy things of Gods because those be admitted which ought not? Is not this rather to make sad the Heart of the righteous? That of *Esay 65. 11.* *Ye are they that forsake the Lord that prepare a Table for the Troup, and furnish a drink-offering for the number.* This I say hath been alledged to tax the negligence

of them who admit the promiscuous multitude to the Table of the Lord: As if the Prophet had blamed Israel for the like carelessness in their Passover and Peace-offerings: whereas the text doth blame their Idolatry, not their profaness: Idolatry in sacrificing to *Jupiter* and *Mercury*: to the Host of Heaven. But admit it as a tax of negligence and profaness, yet must it not fall upon every particular person: Apply it to the Church-officers and spare not: but blame not them, who because the promiscuous multitude are not turn'd away, do not turn away themselves from the Table of the Lord. And so much for the first Argument, &c.

*The second Argument.*

**N**O man may neglect, either the Duty that he oweth to God; or the Benefit which God reacheth forth to Him upon pretence that another man doth not perform his Duty, or is not fitted to receive the Benefit with Him. Shall not the Husband pray, or Hear and Receiv, because the wife of his Bosome is passionate and irreconcilable? Shall not *Lot* make hast out of *Sodome*, because his son-in-laws do not prepare to go with him? That it is a Duty to receiv the Sacrament is plain enough by that precept, *Do this in Remembrance of mee*: That there is a Benefit reached forth to us in it, is as evident by that word of our Saviour, *This is my Body, This is my Blood; He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life*. Nay more: This Benefit cannot be had without this duty: *Except yee eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drinke his blood, yee have no life in you*, Joh. 6. 53. You will perhaps reply: That Duties must be performed in a right manner, otherwise we may provoke God: Israel must eat the Passover, yet not in their uncleanness, nor with the unclean, say the same of Christians. I grant the Proposition for sound and good: The instance of Israel doth not reach home to the point in hand. It doth not appear by any text of Scripture: That if the Master of the familie did neglect to exclude such as were unclean, that thereupon the children or servants did, or might lawfully forbear the Passover.

Add this also, To bring home the Argument more particularly to the cause in hand where a prepared Heart may comply with the principall end of Receiving the Sacrament, ther ought he not to absent himself for want of the secondary. Reason giveth it, That wher ther is a Duty to be done, a Benefit to be expected: If ther be divers Ends of doing that duty, some more, some less principall: No reason to neglect that by which the Principall end may be obtained, because we cannot obtain the secondary. Now then, As God hath appointed and ordained this Sacrament; 1. To hold forth the Benefit of Christs death to the worthy Receiver, that by partaking of Christs flesh and blood the Christian may be more neerly united to Christ himself in the first place, and then to the members of Christ. 2. To call for and cause in the Society of the faithfull a publick Testification of their mutuall love and charity one to another as members of the same



same myſticall body. So, the principall end of Receiving is to continue the Union and Communion with Chriſt, and all good Chriſtians (the living members of Chriſt) which was begun in Baptiſm: And the ſecondary is to make profeſſion of it by joining with this and that Aſſembly of Chriſtians. Now then, ſince the primary end of Receiving is our Union with Chriſt: and our union with Chriſtians is but the ſecondary ( For we are not united to Chriſt by being received into the Congregation, but indeed received into the Congregation becauſe firſt united to Chriſt. ) Nay ſince, the primary end, is Union: and our Profeſſion or Teſtification therof is but the ſecond ( or third ) end of Receiving. Therefore where the Primary end may be obtained, why ſhould the want of the ſecond ( or perhaps the third ) be accounted any juſt barr to keep us off. Now, howſoever the mixture of bad with the good, or the ſcandalous courſes of over-many in the Aſſembly might ſeem a juſt barr to our Profeſſion of Communion and Fellowship with this or that Congregation, yet ſince it cannot hinder us in obtaining our deſire of Union with Chriſt, and his myſticall Body, why ſhould this mixture be any barr to the Duty enjoined? In very deed if that Profeſſion of our ſelves to be of the Number of them who hold of Chriſt and his Church, if this ( I ſay ) were the principall end of Receiving the Sacrament, Then were there ſome ſhew of Reason to forbear joining with a mixt Aſſembly: But now, it is otherwiſe. It were indeed to be wiſhed, that the whole Congregation were ſuch as that we might affectionately deſire to continue in Communion and Fellowship with them: But if it fall out otherwiſe through the fault of other men: Can that be a ſufficient reaſon to hinder us from the Sacrament; The prime fruit and Benefit wher-of we may partake of, even in the mixt Aſſembly? Add this alſo: That it is charitably ſuppoſed, ther be ſome Saints in the Congregation; and in our addreſs to the Sacrament we do profeſs our deſire of Union and Communion with them: if others intrude themſelves, we came not thither to meet with them. Now the Queſtion is, whether we may neglect the good and godly Chriſtians, and that Duty which we ow to God in reſpect of them, becauſe of the bad and wicked, whom finding ther, we have not power to remove.

*The third Argument.*

**T**hat Opinion which in the beſt Ages of the Church hath been condemned of error: And that which neceſſarily caſteth Chriſtians upon inextricable difficulty's and diſcomforts, is in all probability erroneous, and therefore not to be embraced: Such is the opinion of them who hold it ſinfull for a Chriſtian ( tho well-prepared for the holy Sacrament by ſelf-examination according to the Doctrine of the Apoſtle ) to draw neer to the Table of the Lord in the company of them that are unjuſtly permitted to come to that holy Ordinance. That it hath been condemned as erroneous in the beſt ages of the Church, is evident

evident by the story of the Novatians first, and the Donatists afterward, who

Against the Donatists doth St. *Augustin* dispute, as did St. *Cyprian* before him against the Novatians. Note here, that often in his books *De Bapt. contra Donatist.* & *contra Crescon.* *Gram. lib. 2. cap. 15.* doth St. *Augustin* cite an Authority out of *Cyprian, lib. de lapsis*, to prove the conclusion that we have in hand. *Nos non communicare peccatis aliorum eris nisi cum iis in Sacramentum communione maneamus.*

upon such grounds made a separation from the Church of God, and set up select Congregations of their own; utterly condemning those Churches and Assemblies, who admitted of any such to the Communion of the Church whom they accounted fit to be suspended from the Sacrament, and the society of the faithful.

That it doth necessarily cast many Christians upon inextricable difficulties and discomforts is evident in this: That if it be unlawfull to receive the Sacrament in a mixt Assembly; Then it may

fall out that some Christians may for ever be deprived of that Ordinance, and so want that comfort both in life and death, which they might have by it. For why? Some have not liberty nor means of separation, and seeking elsewhere, *ex.gr.* Wives, children, servants which are under the Covert and command of their Husbands, Parents, Masters: Some again are shut up in prison; others banished or confined to such a place where this Doctrine is not beleaved, nor is that Sacrament any where to be had, but in the Parochiall Assemblies of that Place and People. Now for all such to be deprived of the Sacrament, and of the comfort which cometh by it, is a matter of such inconvenience, that it cannot in any probability be allowed as an Order, and Appointment of Christ. Consequently I conclude; That the Opinion which denyeth it lawfull for a Christian to communicate in a mixt Assembly, is in all probability erroneous and not to be received.

This also may be cast in to make up full weight and measure: That we find in the Gospel our Blessed Saviour not excluding *Judas* from the Passover, even when he knew that he had conspired with the Priests to betray him. Nor do any of the Disciples, when our Saviour told them, *Ye are not all clean, One of you shall betray me*, not any of them do call upon Christ to turn out the Traitor, no not when by the Sopp given to *Judas*, Christ had manifested him to be the man. Wher-in if the Apostles were to blame (so it may be these men may think) as not sufficiently (at that time) carefull to have an Holy Communion by separating the pretious from the vile: yet certainly our blessed Saviour did not at all transgress the Rule of Holiness, Nor would he have permitted *Judas* to sit so neer them, if any of them might thereby fail of Receiving the Benefit that might upon self-preparation be justly expected from that Sacrament. Nor do I know what can be excepted against this, unless any would deny the Necessity of morall cleanness to the preparing and fitting of the Jews for the worthy receiving of the Passover, or boldly avouch that nothing more was required of them but a care



of Ceremoniall purity, and legall purifications of the Flesh: which I suppose is an opinion so gross and absurd, that none of understanding would own it and avouch it. We read *Hezekiah* urging the Preparation of the Heart, as an Argument to prevail with God to pardon the neglect of Ceremoniall purification: which had been of no force at all, if those Purifications had not been required only in the way of signification and commonefaction to put them in mind of that spirituall and morall duty, the Preparation of Heart. If God took any pleasure in washing the hands, and scouring the flesh, why doth our Saviour blame the Pharisees who were but too diligent, and observant of their Ceremonies: No, no: Evident it is, that Sacrifices and Ceremonies, were acceptable only as Institutions, and Admonitions of Morall Duties: As at other times; So in their Preparation of themselves to the Holy Sacrament: Nor was it enough for *Judas* that he was clean (as farr as the water could reach) no not enough that his feet were washed (if washed they were) by Christ: Since the Heart was full of covetousnes and divelish intentions, Whose uncleannes, might it be an hinderance to the Residue in receiving the Benefit of the Sacrament, Can we with reason beleeve, that our Saviour would not have shutt him out, and so have taught them (upon such an occasion) the Necessity of what these men call for with so much importunity?

I close up all in a word: Since neither Scripture nor Reason do conclude it unlawfull. Nay since (the Scripture being silent in the cause, neither prohibiting nor reprehending) Reason doth draw us to conclude against the opinion of these men: I conclude, *It is not sinfull for a Christian to receive the Sacrament in a mixt Assembly.*

*et sic pergitur.*

*Appendix.*

*Extracted out of a Responsary Letter.*

To your two Questions propounded in the close of the Letter I return this breef Answer for your satisfaction.

To the first, viz. *Whether it be not a sinn in the Minister to deliver the Sacrament to him that is scandalous: i.e. to him who having been such, hath not as yet reconciled himself to God and the Church by publik evidences of his Repentance.* I cannot admit the Affirmative for a Truth, viz. It is sin in him except with these limitations.

1. When ther is power in the Hand of the Minister to keep such men off, and to bring them to the Testification of their Repentance. 2. Where it is evident

to the Minister, that the man hath not reconciled himself to God and the Congregation. 3. When the man is indeed scandalous *i.e.* notoriously known to have given offence. But the case is otherwise; when either the Minister hath not power in his hand: or when he is not certain of the Mans Non-Repentance, and Non-Reconciliation: Or thirdly, when the man is not indeed scandalous. I say, *Not indeed*, Because some men account some things to be scandalous which indeed are not. There is a scandal to a weak brother in the want of a charitable use of Christian Liberty; There is a scandal to them that are without: This latter is only that scandal that deserveth repulse from the Communion: Not the other.

To the second *viz.* *Whether it be not a sin in the People to communicate with any such: i.e.* To receive the Communion in the Society of such a Minister, and such a scandalous Brother. I say as before: I cannot affirm it sinfull; except with these limitations. 1. When it is evident to the Christian that such a person is indeed scandalous, and hath not reconciled himself. 2. When it is in the liberty of the Communicant to chuse or refuse such company. But the case is otherwise; when it is not evident to him, that the other hath not reconciled himself: or when it is not in the liberty of the Communicant to refuse. Now as it is not in the liberty of the Christian (saving the Duty that he oweth to God) to abstain altogether from the Sacrament: So neither is it in his liberty (saving his duty that he oweth to the Magistrat) to abstain from that Congregation wher-of by vertue of his house and Habitation he is known to be a Member. At the Communion of the sick peradventure he may forbear from joining in society with such, if they should desire: Not so, from the publick Congregation.

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*FINIS.*

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*Imprimatur,*

CHARLES HERLE.



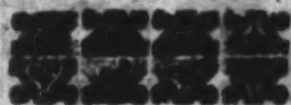
A <sup>7</sup>  
**PARADOX.**

THAT  
DESIGNE  
UPON

RELIGION,

Was not the cause of STATE Mis-  
government :

But an effect of it.



*novemb: 29*

LONDON,

Printed for T. W. 1644